

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

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TO AMEMBASSY TUNIS PRIORITY
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AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USCINCEUR
CINCUSNAVEUR
CNO

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 217571

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, TS

SUBJECT: SOVIET NAVAL VESSEL REPAIRS IN TUNISIAN PORT

REF: A; TUNIS 8109 (NOTAL) B. STATE 208702 (NOTAL)
C. STATE 213505

AMBASSADOR SHOULD USE NEXT APPROPRIATE OCCASION TO RAISE
SOVIET USE OF MENZEL-BOURGUIBA WITH FOREIGN MINISTER.
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SUGGEST YOU PREDICATE DISCUSSION, AS WE DID WITH HEDDA,
ON APPARENT REGULAR USE OF DOCKYARD BY SOVIET MEDITERRANEAN
SQUADRON FOR REPAIRS AND DRAW ON FOLLOWING TALKING POINTS
IN YOUR CONVERSATION:

-- U.S. VERY CONSCIOUS OF HISTORY MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL
RELATIONS WHICH HAS EXISTED WITH TUNISIA SINCE TUNISIA'S

INDEPENDENCE.

-- U.S. HAS GREATLY APPRECIATED WELCOME ACCORDED BY TUNISIA
TO SHIPS OF SIXTH FLEET.

-- SIXTH FLEET HAS ASSISTED TUNISIA IN TIMES OF CALAMITY
AND CRISIS.

- S. REALIZES THAT AS NON-ALIGNED NATION TUNISIA OPENS
ITS PORTS TO SOVIET MEDITERRANEAN SQUADRON.

--USE OF TUNISIAN DOCKYARD BY SOVIET MEDITERRANEAN
SQUADRON ON A REGULAR BASIS WOULD BE VIEWED BY USG IN
DIFFERENT LIGHT AND WITH CONSIDERABLE CONCERN AS IT WOULD
UPGRADE THE OPERATIONAL CAPABILITIES OF THE SQUADRON.

--IT POSSIBLE THERE COULD BE NEGATIVE CONGRESSIONAL AND
PUBLIC REACTION IF SOVIET VESSELS ARE GOING TO BE MAKING
REGULAR USE OF MENZEL-BOURGUIBA FACILITIES. VANCE

NOTE BY OC/T: DISTRIBUTION CO-ORDINATED WITH S/S-O MR. GUNDERSON.

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